

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MONROV 02029 091325Z

51

ACTION AF-04

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 L-02 MC-02 NSC-07 NSCE-00 EUR-10

CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 PM-03 ACDA-10 DRC-01

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R 091229Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1535

AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

S E C R E T MONROVIA 2029

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINT, LI, IV

SUBJECT: ARMS SMUGGLING IN HARPER CITY

REF: MONROVIA 0836

1. EVENING APRIL 8 DR. A.T. DI STEFANO, ITALIAN NATIONAL, US-EDUCATED MEDICAL DIRECTOR OF GOL HOSPITAL IN HARPER CITY, CALLED AT AMBASSADOR'S HOUSE. HE SAID HE COMING AT REQUEST OF ITALIAN CHARGE GIORGI AND WAS PREPARED TELL US WHAT HE KNEW ABOUT ARMS SMUGGLING IN HARPER CITY.

2. ACCORDING TO DI STEFANO, ARMS NOT LANDED AT HARPER BUT RATHER ARE BROUGHT INTO MONROVIA WHERE THEY ARE LOADED ON A FIAT TRUCK OWNED BY MRS. CLARENCE SIMPSON, WIFE OF ATTORNEY GENERAL, AND OPERATED IN HER NAME BY LEBANESE TRADER NAME OF ATALA (PHONETIC). ARMS ARE THEN DRIVEN TO SPORT SOMEWHAT NORTH OF PLEEBO WHERE TRUCK IS DIVERTED INTO BUSH, UNLOADED, AND WEAPONS SHIPPED INTO IVORY COAST. DI STEFANO STATES OPERATION IS MANAGED BY A MAN NAMED DEAN (PHONETIC) WHO SAID TO BE MIXED LEBANESE/PILIPINO OR CHINESE BLOOD. DI STEFANO BELIEVES MRS. SIMPSON OWNS TRUCKING FIRM BUT IS HERSELF UNAWARE USE TO
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PAGE 02 MONROV 02029 091325Z

WHICH HER TRUCK IS PUT.

3. DI STEFANO CATEGORICALLY STATES HE HAS SEEN WEAPONS, WHICH INCLUDE BARRETTA MACHINE GUNS AND RIFLES OF SKODA MANUFACTURE, AND SOME FROM GERMANY. HE CLAIMS THEY ARE FOR THE MOST PART PACKED IN RICE BAGS AND HIDDEN UNDER TIMBER AND OTHER MIXED GOODS. DI STEFANO, WHO CLAIMS HAVE HAD SOME BASIC MILITARY TRAINING AND IS SERVING AS OVERSEAS DOCTOR IN LIEU OF FURTHER MILITARY SERVICE, ASSURES US THAT HE CAN IDENTIFY VARIOUS TYPES OF WEAPONS AND CLAIMS HAVE PRESENTED 35 MM PICTURES TO GIORGI. HE UNAWARE NUMBER OF SHIPMENTS BUT STATES THERE HAVE BEEN MANY. HE SPECIFICALLY BELIEVES ARMS ARE NOT KEPT IN LIBERIA BUT GO TO PEOPLE IN IVORY COAST WHOM HE HAS NO WAY OF IDENTIFYING. IN REPLY TO QUESTION THAT THESE WEAPONS MIGHT BE SPORTING GUNS SUCH AS SHOTGUNS, DI STEFANO SAID CATEGORICALLY, NO.

4. DI STEFANO ALSO STATES HE 99 PERCENT CERTAIN COUNTY SUPER-INTENDENT J.N.D, ANDERSON, JR., AND PROBABLY HIS FATHER SENATOR AND LOCAL WHIG PARTY EXECUTIVE J.N.D. ANDERSON, SR., AWARE THIS TRAFFIC. HE ALSO CLAIMS GOL STARTED INVESTIGATION THIS TRAFFIC SOME MONTHS AGO BUT THIS WAS THOROUGHLY QUASHED AT SPECIFIC REQUEST PRESIDENT TOLBERT.

5. DI STEFANO IMPLIES SOME DARK MOTIVE TO FREQUENT PRESENCE SOVIET SHIPS LOADING TIMBER IN HARPER PORT. WE SEE NO CLEAR RELATION TO PRESENCE SOVIETS AND ALLEGATIONS ARMS SMUGGLING.

6. COMMENT: DI STEFANO, WHO SPEAKS REASONABLY GOOD ENGLISH, APPEARED CATEGORIC AND EMPHATIC. WE WILL ATTEMPT USE GREAT CARE OBTAIN FURTHER INFORMATION ON REPORT OF MONROVIA INVOLVEMENT ALONG WITH INFORMATION ON INDIVIDUALS NAMED BUT NOT OPTIMISTIC RESULTS. DI STEFANO'S STORY SEEMS OUTWARDLY MORE EXACT THAN ORIGINAL REPORT FROM GIORGI, WHOSE MOTIVES IN THIS SEEM UNCLEAR AND PERHAPS RELATED HIS LESS THAN SAVORY BACKGROUND, AS REPORTED BY CONGEN BOMBAY. IT OUR IMPRESSION GIORGI LOOKING FOR SOME SORT OF MONETARY REWARD FOR HIS DEVOTION TO ITALO-AMERICAN SOLIDARITY. FURTHER, DI STEFANO CLEARED UP TO SOME EXTENT GIORGI'S STORY OF TAPE RECORDER IN HOME OF SUPERINTENDENT AT TIME OF AMBASSADOR'S RECENT VISIT. RECORDER, HE SAID, WAS CARRIED BY LOCAL MINISTRY OF INFORMATION REPORTER, PRESUMABLY FOR PURPOSE OF GETTING FULL ACCOUNT OF AMBASSADOR-SUPERINTENDENT

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PAGE 03 MONROV 02029 091325Z

CONVERSATIONS.

7. EMBASSY CONTINUES BE HOPEFUL ABIDJAN MAY HAVE SOME COMMENT ON THIS ALLEGED TRAFFIC.

MANFULL

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NNN

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